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Twenty-sixth meeting of the Columbia Historical Society, held in the Lecture Hall, Columbian University, Washington, D. C., June 8th, 1897, at 8 o'clock p. m.

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## REMINISCENCES OF THE MAYORS OF WASHINGTON.

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The Meeting was called to order by the President, Hon. JOHN A. KASSON.

The PRESIDENT: There was a resolution adopted at the last meeting of the Society, after hearing the very valuable paper read to us by Judge Hagner, for the appointment of a committee to memorialize Congress touching the nomenclature of the streets of Washington, and the Chair was directed to appoint that committee. The sub-committee for the selection of the members of that committee have announced the following members of the committee for the purpose named:

Messrs. M. I. Weller, Alexander B. Hagner, Marcus Baker, Lewis J. Davis, M. F. Morris, J. Ormond Wilson, to which committee they have added the President of this Society. The committee accordingly is appointed as named.

I have further to say to the Society that in making efforts to get some trace of a likeness of the well known Major L'Enfant, who was the surveyor and engineer laying out the city, and of whom we have had some very valuable papers presented, I wrote to Philadelphia to perhaps the oldest among the known citizens

of that city, Mr. Frederick Fraley, a very venerable man, who was a child at the time the Capitol was changed from Philadelphia, the seat of government, to Washington, hoping that he might have some memory of L'Enfant, and possibly might know where a portrait of him might be found. He responded in a very kindly and intelligent manner, in his old age, that he never did see Major L'Enfant, and knew no way by which his likeness could be obtained.

In further prosecuting the inquiry, I had heard of the Saint Minim collection of portraits, the property of the Corcoran Art Gallery, and it was thought by one of the Trustees, that a portrait of him would be found there in that very valuable collection, which is very large. Mr. Frederick McGuire, one of the trustees, writes that he cannot find the portrait in the St. Minim collection of L'Enfant, "but I do find one that may interest you. It is of Dr. William Thornton, whom Washington appointed Commissioner for laying out the Federal city. He made the design for the Capitol, and received a premium for the same".

So that, not finding what we want, we find the existence of another very valuable and historical portrait, connected with the history of this city. I thought it would interest the society to know that fact.

One other communication. You will remember your disappointment on the evening of Decoration Day on finding the Hall closed. The very worthy and distinguished President of the University has seen fit to write me a letter in which he requested me to make known to the audience his profound regret at the mistake of one of the subordinates in charge of the halls, and his forgetfulness in respect to the opening and lighting of the hall at the close of that holiday. Deeming it a holiday, he had entirely forgotten this special

appointment, and the building was closed. Dr. Whitman, of course, is without fault, and I thank him for the interest he has shown, and, at his request, announce his regrets and apology to the meeting.

This evening we have one of the most interesting topics connected with the history of Washington, and without any preliminary further than to say that one of the most eminent and distinguished of citizens of Washington, and one of its mayors, has consented to address you this evening, together with two or three papers which will be presented on that subject of great interest, I think, to the audience. I have the pleasure now of introducing our worthy and distinguished fellow citizen, Ex-Mayor James G. Berret, who will speak to you of the reminiscences of the Mayoralty.